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FURTHER REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL PURSUANT TO SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 743 (1992)

INTRODUCTION

1. By its resolution 847 (1993) of 30 June 1993, the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) for an additional interim period terminating on 30 September 1993, and requested the Secretary-General to report after one month on progress towards implementation of the United Nations peace-keeping plan for Croatia and all relevant Security Council resolutions. On 16 August 1993, the Secretary-General reported to the Council (S/26310) on this matter. In his report, he recommended that no action be taken at that stage to reconsider UNPROFOR's mandate in the territory of the Republic of Croatia, and said that he would submit a further recommendation to the Council in the latter half of September 1993. The present report is intended to assist the Security Council in its deliberations on the renewal of the mandate of UNPROFOR.

I. UNPROFOR STRUCTURE

2. UNPROFOR is headed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Thorvald Stoltenberg, and includes military, civil affairs (including civilian police) and administrative components, with overall headquarters in Zagreb, Croatia. As of 10 September 1993 the strength of the military personnel, led by the Force Commander, General Jean Cot of France, amounted to 24,281, including 456 United Nations military observers. There are 628 civilian police, 695 international civilian staff (including 306 contractual personnel who are not members of the international civil service) and 974 local staff.

II. BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

3. The Bosnia and Herzegovina command of UNPROFOR, headquartered in Kiseljak, and led by Lt. General Francis Briquemont of Belgium, consists of 11,511 military, civilian and police personnel. The Bosnia-Herzegovina Command operates under a series of Security Council mandates relating, inter alia, to Sarajevo airport, the protection of humanitarian convoys and the safe areas. Sarajevo airport continues to provide the main humanitarian lifeline for the city of Sarajevo. This well-organized operation has received more than 4,700

humanitarian flights since its inception in June 1992. UNPROFOR's presence in several other areas of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina has, to a limited extent, contributed to a lessening of tensions and has facilitated the passage of humanitarian convoys. The achievement of an overall peace settlement for the Republic would have a significant impact upon the work of UNPROFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

4. However, in recent months, continued hostilities in central and southern Bosnia have seriously undermined the capability of UNPROFOR, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian agencies to deliver humanitarian assistance there and elsewhere. Intense fighting in this region has blocked the main supply routes for humanitarian assistance into northern Bosnia, and the deliberate targeting of United Nations vehicles and personnel has further restricted the freedom of movement of UNPROFOR and UNHCR in the area. In this connection, UNPROFOR and UNHCR have initiated a humanitarian "Operation Lifeline" to keep the main routes open to help ensure the survival of up to 2.2 million people in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the forthcoming winter. It will only work effectively if there is a political agreement leading to peace and if adequate funding is forthcoming.

III. FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

5. The Secretary-General last submitted a report to the Security Council in respect of UNPROFOR's operations in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on 13 July 1993 (S/26099). The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia command of UNPROFOR, led by Brigadier-General Finn Saermark-Thomsen of Denmark, now consists of 1,190 military, civilian and police personnel. A Nordic battalion is based at Kjojila, east of Skopje, and a United States contingent of 315 troops arrived in Skopje in early July, deploying to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia side of the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) on 20 August 1993. United Nations military observers, United Nations civilian police (UNCIVPOL) and civil affairs officers have also been deployed. Since early 1993 the northern border and the western border north of Debar have been constantly monitored from observation posts and by regular patrols. United Nations military observers and civilian police also mount regular patrols in their areas of operation. UNPROFOR maintains close cooperation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) monitor mission there. It now also, in cooperation with the authorities in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and CSCE's sanctions assistance mission, monitors traffic crossing the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). This first venture into the field of "preventive deployment" by the United Nations has so far been successful. UNPROFOR enjoys an excellent cooperative relationship with the Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

IV. CROATIA

6. Since the renewed outbreak of hostilities in Croatia, consequent upon the Croatian incursion into the United Nations protected areas and "pink zones" on 22 January 1993, continuous endeavours have been made within the framework of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia and by UNPROFOR to bring

about a cease-fire and a restoration of the prior status in accordance with Security Council resolution 802 (1993) of 25 January 1993, in order to permit a revival of efforts to implement Security Council resolution 743 (1992) and subsequent resolutions relating to the situation in Croatia. Negotiations under the auspices of the Co-Chairmen of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia to implement resolution 802 (1993) have proceeded on a continuing and active basis. It had been hoped that, with a progressive restoration of mutual confidence between the two sides, talks could open under the auspices of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia on national reconciliation and on broader political questions, within the framework of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

7. However, as the Council is aware, new tensions arose following the decision of the Croatian Government, on 6 July 1993, to rebuild and reopen the Maslenica bridge on 18 July, the consequences of which have been described in the Secretary-General's report of 16 August 1993 (S/26310). Though, in pursuance of the Erdut/Zagreb agreement of 15/16 July 1993, UNPROFOR had moved 2,000 troops into the areas adjacent to those from which the Croatian forces were to withdraw, these troops could not be deployed because the Croatian military authorities would not allow UNPROFOR full access to the areas concerned. Nor did they provide any cooperation in regard to the planning of the operation or the reconnaissance for it.

8. On 2 August 1993, following Serb shelling of the area, one of the pontoons of the Maslenica bridge sank, but the Co-Chairmen concluded that there was still enough common ground to continue negotiations. They therefore extended an invitation to both sides to come to Geneva to begin negotiations on a cease-fire which would include the elements of the original Erdut/Zagreb agreement. The parties accepted the invitation and talks started on 12 August 1993 at Geneva. Despite intensive discussions in Geneva, Zagreb and Knin between the representatives of the Co-Chairmen and representatives of the parties, the most recent meetings having taken place on 9 and 10 September, it has not yet been possible to achieve an overall cease-fire agreement. However, both sides did agree to send military experts to a meeting which was to have taken place on board a ship in the Adriatic on 12 September.

9. On 9 September, after several days of grave incidents in the United Nations protected areas and "pink zones", and rising tension in Croatia, shelling intensified on both sides of the confrontation line, and the Croatian Army once again effected a military incursion. This took place in the area of Medak, where three Serb villages were seized. The hostilities worsened on 10 and 11 September, with a serious escalation in the military means employed: the Croatian Government used aircraft to bomb Serb positions, and the Serbs fired rockets and heavy missiles at Croatian population centres. Following the intervention of my Special Representative and the Force Commander, and a call from the Security Council (S/26436), the parties finally agreed to a cease-fire on 15 September. Croatian withdrawal to positions occupied before this incursion has begun after some delay, and UNPROFOR is moving some 500 to 600 troops into the area to replace the withdrawing Croatian armed forces. Efforts to restore the shipboard meeting, postponed as a result of the hostilities, are continuing.

V. OBSERVATIONS

10. The United Nations peace-keeping plan approved by the Security Council in resolution 743 (1992), which remains the cornerstone of UNPROFOR's mandate, was agreed to by Croatia, the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and by the Serb authorities in Knin. It is a plan for the withdrawal of armed forces, the return of refugees, reconciliation between Croatia and the Serb community living there and a future constitutional settlement. Subsequently, the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia ceased to exist, and four of its constituent Republics - Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Slovenia - became Members of the United Nations in their own right. UNPROFOR's mandate in respect of Croatia was expanded by successive resolutions of the Security Council to include such matters as the "pink zones", border control, the provisions of resolution 820 (1993) on control by Croatia of imports and exports to United Nations protected areas, as well as the tasks associated with the ongoing conflict which was resumed on 22 January 1993.

11. The political and military situation on the ground means that these mandates cannot be implemented without the cooperation of the Serb authorities in Knin, which obliges UNPROFOR to negotiate with them as well as with the Croatian Government. In this situation, UNPROFOR's credibility has been undermined, as each side, for its own reasons, blames the Force for failing to fulfil its expectations - of the restoration of normal conditions and the return of refugees, in the case of Croatia, or of protection, in the case of the local Serbs. Each declares, from time to time, its readiness to use force to achieve its political and territorial aspirations. The continuing uncertainty over the future political shape and form of a settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina also affects, to a significant degree, the solution of the problem. In this situation, fighting continues, with more death and destruction; attitudes become more polarized; and peoples and economies on both sides of the confrontation line undergo increasing deprivation.

12. While some elements of UNPROFOR have been able to adapt their activities to these changed circumstances, key parts of the plan have been difficult, if not impossible, to implement, and have become more so since the resumption of hostilities following the Croatian incursion of 22 January 1993. With each subsequent unilateral action on each side of the confrontation line, the crisis has deepened. Last week's events marked the third major incursion by Croatia into areas of the United Nations protected areas or pink zones, and (except for the most recent case) it has subsequently failed to withdraw its forces, contending that these areas are "part of Croatia" and that it has a right to occupy them, if not by agreement, then by force. Many of the tasks of the military component of UNPROFOR cannot, in a situation of continuing strife, be carried out. Yet UNPROFOR members are often exposed to physical danger, and many have been harassed, threatened and abused by both Croatian and Serb armed elements. As of 13 September 1993, the Force has suffered 654 casualties, 57 of them fatal; of these, 357 and 31 respectively were in Croatia. UNPROFOR's freedom of movement is increasingly circumscribed. The Croatian leadership and press frequently express vehement criticism, sometimes bordering on vilification, of UNPROFOR, based on what can only be seen as a wilful misreading of its mandate.

13. President Tudjman of Croatia, in a letter to me dated 13 September 1993, advanced a number of considerations which he wished to be taken into account in future efforts for peace and normalization in these areas. I have transmitted this letter to the Co-Chairmen so that they may take it into account in the exercise of their good offices. One of President Tudjman's suggestions is that UNPROFOR be divided into three parts - UNPROFOR (Croatia), UNPROFOR (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and UNPROFOR (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) - while retaining its integrated military, logistical and administrative structure under the command of one Special Representative of the Secretary-General and one theatre Force Commander. In view of the importance attached by the Croatian authorities to such a division, and taking into account the circumstances prevailing on the ground at the present time, I have decided to grant this suggestion favourable consideration. Accordingly, should the mandate of UNPROFOR be renewed as discussed below, I will instruct my Special Representative to take steps to implement such a division, provided that there are no additional financial implications and that overall command and coordination by himself and the Force Commander is not weakened.

14. In turning to the mandate itself, I should like to stress that the fundamental solution to the problem has to be sought through political dialogue. It is the parties themselves who bear the primary responsibility for achieving such a solution, and who must take steps towards reconciliation. In this process, the principal objective of UNPROFOR can only be to keep the peace, thereby permitting negotiations to take place on an overall political settlement.

15. As the Security Council well knows, the lack of cooperation by the parties, and in particular the refusal of the Serb side to disarm as provided for in the original plan, has prevented UNPROFOR from carrying out essential elements of its mandate. The presence of UNPROFOR in Croatia has nevertheless to some extent contained a volatile situation which, were it once again to explode, could ignite a war with far-reaching consequences. I have been sorely tempted, in the light of the criticism of UNPROFOR by both sides and the dangers and abuse to which its personnel are exposed, to recommend the withdrawal of the Force altogether, but I am conscious that such a step could only result in further conflict.

16. I therefore recommend to the Security Council that it renew the mandate of UNPROFOR for a period of six months, as is usual with most United Nations peace-keeping operations. At the same time, I suggest that the Council demand that the parties in Croatia conclude an immediate cease-fire and cooperate with UNPROFOR, which must, in the first instance, be enabled to fulfil the peace-keeping aspects of its mandate. To enhance the security of the Force, I have requested the extension of close air support to the territory of Croatia (S/26468). To improve the atmosphere in which UNPROFOR's efforts are conducted, the Council may wish to direct the parties to cooperate with UNPROFOR in restoring water, power, communications and other economic necessities, as most recently demanded by the Council in resolution 847 (1993). At the conclusion of a two-month period, i.e. by 30 November 1993, I shall report to the Council on the progress which has been made by the Co-Chairmen and by UNPROFOR. I may also, at that time, convey further recommendations to the Council, on the basis of developments during these two months, and on the course of negotiations undertaken between the parties.

17. I should like to pay tribute to my Special Representative, Mr. Thorvald Stoltenberg, the Force Commander, General Jean Cot, and the brave men and women of UNPROFOR for their remarkable courage and dedication in the performance of their duties. I count on them to continue to make every effort, in cooperation with the parties, to achieve the implementation of all aspects of the peace-keeping plan.